Privatisation of Nuclear Power Plants

922. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any plan to privatise the nuclear power plants;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons for the same; and

(c) whether it would ease the escalated energy needs of the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) and (b) The Government of India are open to specific offers for participation by Private firms, Indian or Foreign, in the Nuclear Power Sector. However, the Government have not received any concrete proposals from the Private Sector so far for setting up Nuclear Power Plants in the country. Such offers, when received, have to be considered on the basis of technical suitability, economic attractiveness, regulatory requirements of our country and the conditons attached to the offers.

(c) Yes, Sir. In view of the present scenario of electrical power generation, private participation in Nuclear Power Sector will ease the escalated energy needs of the country.

Positive Talks between India and Pakistan

923. SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the Pak-Foreign Secretary Shamshed Ahmed's statement reported in the Asian Age of May 3, 1999, saying that Pakistan is ready to talk with India on options other than the UN resolutions on Kashmir and welcomes "positive talks"; and

(b) if so, Government's reaction and response thereto indicating the headway made in Indo-Pak talks since the "Lahore Declaration"?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) and (b) Pakistan's aggressive approach, hostile policies and propaganda towards India remains unaltered. Its sponsorship of

cross-border terrorism in the State of Jammu and Kashmir and elsewhere in India continues unabated. Pakistani forces have also continued firing across the LOC and International Border in Jammu and Kashmir.

Government have seen the statement attributed to the senior Pakistani diplomat. However, following the military coup, statements made by Pakistani spokesmen indicate that Pakistan's aggressive assertions of territorial claims on Jammu and Kashmir continue.

The State of Jammu and Kashmir is an integral part of the Indian Union. A part of the territory of the state remains under the illegal and forcible occupation of Pakistan. India remains committed to resolving all outstanding issues with Pakistan in accordance with the Simla Agreement and the Lahore Declaration. We expect Pakistan to demonstrate its adherence to these agreements by abandoning its sponsorship of cross-border terrorism and hostile propaganda against India.

De-Escalation of Tension between India and Pakistan

924. SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Pakistani "Chief Executive" (following the coup in Pakistan) has offered de-escalation of tension between the two countries and to curb cross-border terrorism in respect of India;

(b) if so, what specific steps were proposed to the taken by Pakistan in this direction; and

(c) what is Government's response thereto?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) to (c) The military coup in Pakistan has not altered Pakistan's aggressive approach, hostile policies and propaganda towards India. Pakistan's sponsorship of cross-border terrorism in the State of Jammu & Kashmir and elsewhere in India has continued unabated. Pakistani forces have also continued firing across the Line of Control and the International Border in Jammu and Kashmir. Pakistan has made no moves to withdraw troops from the Line of